

## REMARKS

Applicants are concurrently filing this Amendment with an Information Disclosure Statement and a Request for Continued Examination in response to the Notice of Allowance. Accordingly, the Issue Fee has not been paid in response to the Notice of Allowance.

Claims 1-9 and 17-31 are pending. Claims 18-31 are newly-presented.

Reconsideration of claims 1-9 in view of the amendments and the prior art cited in the Information Disclosure Statement is requested. Consideration of claims 17-31 in view of the amendments to claim 17 and the prior art cited in the Information Disclosure Statement is requested. Applicant submits that claims 17-31 should be examined with claims 1-9.

Applicant reserves the right to file a divisional application on claims 10-16 which were canceled in response to the Office Action dated April 10, 2003.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this Amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact one of the undersigned attorneys at (312) 704-1890.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: Feb. 20, 2004

By: Raford A. Blackstone, Jr.

Raford A. Blackstone, Jr., Reg. No. 25,156  
Linda L. Palomar, Reg. No. 37,903

TREXLER, BUSHNELL, GIANGIORGI  
BLACKSTONE & MARR, LTD.  
105 W. Adams Street  
Suite 3600  
Chicago, Illinois 60603  
(312) 704-1890